

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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P R 040523Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1235

INFO AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

DIA

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 3551

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH

SUBJ: PARLIAMENTARY VOTE OF CONFIDENCE

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF : BANGKOK 3521

SUMMARY:

FOLLOWING ARE COMMENTS THAT VARIOUS PARLIAMENTARIANS AND POLITICAL PARTY OFFICIALS RECENTLY MADE TO AN EMBASSY POLITICAL ASSISTANT. THE SUBJECT WAS THE ARTICLE 184 VOTE OF CONFIDENCE HURDLE WHICH THE DEMOCRAT-SOCIAL AGRARIAN COALITION CABINET MUST PASS ON MARCH 6 OR 7. THESE RESPONDENTS BELIEVE THAT THE CONSERVATIVES WILL TRY THEIR BEST TO PREVENT THE DEMOCRATS FROM FORMING A GOVERNMENT, AND FAILING THAT OBJECTIVE, WILL TRY TO SABOTAGE THE DEMOCRATS AT AN EARLY DATE BY VOTING AGAINST GOVERNMENT SPONSORED LEGISLATION IN THE ASSEMBLY. THE SCENARIO ASSUMES THAT KHUKRIT PRAMOT WILL BE THE NEXT PRIME MINISTER. END SUMMARY.

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I. AMPHAN HIRANYACHOT (THAI NATION PARLIAMENTARIAN - ROI

ET PROVINCE)

1. AMPHAN CLAIMED HIS PARTY HAS SECURED 135 VOTES AGAINST THE DEMOCRAT-SOCIAL AGRARIAN COALITION GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THAT THAI NATION LEADERS FAVOR A SECRET VOTE IN THE PARLIAMENT AS A MEANS OF ALLOWING THE MAJORITY OF SOCIAL ACTION PARTY MEMBERS TO VOTE AGAINST THE DEMOCRATS. WITH A SECRET VOTE, AMPHAN CALCULATED THERE WOULD BE 160 VOTES AGAINST THE DEMOCRATS.

2. AMPHAN SAID THAT A LONG-STANDING AGREEMENT AMONG THE THAI NATION, SOCIAL ACTION, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTIES IS STILL IN EFFECT. THE SCENARIO IS AS FOLLOWS: THE TOPPLING OF THE DEMOCRAT COALITION GOVERNMENT AT THE MOST SUITABLE TIME; THE SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTY PASSES OVER THE CHANCE TO FORM A COALITION GOVERNMENT; THE PARLIAMENT OFFERS KHUKRIT PRAMOT THE PRIME MINISTERSHIP.

3. AMPHAN SAID THAT THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT THE DEMOCRATS WILL ATTEMPT TO DEFEND THEIR GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE USE OF DEMONSTRATORS OUTSIDE THE PARLIAMENT ON MARCH 6. HE FELT THAT THE DEMOCRATS WOULD AGAIN CALL ON POLICE MAJOR ANAN SENAKHAN TO LEAD THE DEMONSTRATION.

4. AMPHAN ALSO SAID THAT KHLAEO NORAPATI, LEADER OF THE SOCIALIST UNITED FRONT, HAD COMMITTED HIS PARTY TO VOTE FOR THE DEMOCRATS BECAUSE HE HAD RECEIVED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THEM DURING THE ELECTION. AMPHAN SAID THAT IN THE CASE OF THE SECRET VOTE, HOWEVER, THE SOCIALIST UNITED FRONT WOULD VOTE FOR THE THAI NATION COALITION. AMPHAN SAID THAT THIS INFORMATION CAME FROM SAWANG TRACHU, KHLAEO'S RIGHT HAND MAN, DURING A LATE-NIGHT DRINKING SPREE.

5. AMPHAN IS CONVINCED THAT THE DEMOCRATS WERE IN THE PROCESS OF BUYING VOTES FROM MEMBERS OF THE "UNDER TEN" PARTIES AT 150,000 BAHT (\$7,500) EACH.

II. SA-NE SUTSUKHON, SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTY OFFICIAL

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6. SA-NE SAID THAT HIS PARTY PLANNED TO TOPPLE THE DEMOCRAT GOVERNMENT EITHER ON THE DAY OF THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE OR AT THE NEXT APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITY. SOCIAL JUSTICE HAD LONG INTENDED TO JOIN WITH THE THAI NATION AND OTHER PARTIES TO FORM A GOVERNMENT WITH KHUKRIT PRAMOT AS PRIME MINISTER. SA-NE ALSO SAID THAT THE NEW FORCE PARTY HAS SECRETLY AGREED TO JOIN THE THAI NATION-SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP IN THE FUTURE FORMATION OF

A COALITION GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THAT IN THIS CIRCUMSTANCE, THE TOTAL POTENTIAL VOTE AGAINST THE DEMOCRATS, WHICH AT PRESENT STOOD AT 148, WOULD INCREASE TO 160. (COMMENT: ANOTHER SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTY OFFICIAL, KHIAN SUPHROM, CORROBORATED SA-NE'S COMMENTS)

III. SINGTO CHANGTRAKUN, DEMOCRAT PARLIAMENTARIAN FROM BANGKOK

7. SINGTO SAID FEBRUARY 26 THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT IT WAS WISE FOR THE THAI NATION PARTY TO TOPPLE THE DEMOCRAT COALITION GOVERNMENT BEFORE IT HAD A CHANCE TO DEMONSTRATE ITS CAPABILITIES. HE COMPARED THE DEMOCRAT AND THAI NATION GROUPINGS TO TWO THAI BOXERS WHO ARE IN THE PROCESS OF PERFORMING THE "WAI KHURU", AN INITIAL GESTURE OF HOMAGE AND RESPECT. THE ELECTORATE IS THE AUDIENCE. AS WILL ALL THAI AUDIENCES, THE ELECTORATE WOULD BE EXTREMELY UNHAPPY TO MISS THE FIGHT IF THAI NATION KNOCKED OUT THE DEMOCRAT PARTY WITH A SNEAKY KICK BEFORE THE "WAI KHURU" IS FINISHED AND THE BOUT HAS STARTED. THE THAI NATION PARTY SHOULD THEREFORE CONSIDER THE WRATH OF THE DISAPPOINTED AUDIENCE.

8. SINGTO ALSO SAID THAT ON THE DAY OF THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE HE FULLY EXPECTED THAT THERE WOULD BE A DEMONSTRATION OUTSIDE THE PARLIAMENT WHICH WOULD BE SYMPATHETIC TO THE DEMOCRATS. HE THOUGHT THEREFORE, THAT THE TOUGHEST TIME FOR THE COALITION CABINET WOULD COME ON IMPORTANT BILLS WHICH WERE AT CROSS PURPOSES TO THE IDEAS OR INTERESTS OF THE LEFT WING.

IV. PRAWIT SITHANYARAT, SOCIAL ACTION PARTY PARLIAMENTARIAN FROM UBON PROVINCE
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9. DURING LUNCH ON FEB 26, PRAWIT TOLD US THAT HIS PARTY WOULD SUPPORT THE DEMOCRATS ON THE INITIAL VOTE OF CONFIDENCE. HE THOUGHT, HOWEVER, THAT THE DEMOCRATS HAD A WEAK CABINET AND THAT THE LEFTIST PARTIES WOULD DESERT THE DEMOCRATS ON FUTURE LEGISLATION. HE FELT THAT THE DEMOCRAT-SOCIAL AGRARIAN COALITION GOVERNMENT WAS THEREFORE INHERENTLY UNSTABLE.

10. HE STRONGLY WELCOMED ANY CHANCE FOR THE SOCIAL ACTION PARTY AND THAI NATION PARTY TO FORM A GOVERNMENT. HE BELIEVED THAT GIVEN A FAILURE TO SECURE THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE, DEMOCRAT LEADER SENI WOULD NOT DISSOLVE PARLIAMENT. PRAWIT THOUGHT THAT TO DO SO WOULD VIOLATE THAI POLITICAL ETIQUETTE.

11. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE THAT SENI HAS A CHANCE OF SQUEEING

BY THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE LATER THIS WEEK. OPPOSITION PARTIES
COULD COMBINE BEFORE THEN TO STOP HIM BUT, IF HE GETS THROUGH,
THEY ARE CERTAIN TO MAKE POLITICAL LIFE UNPLEASANT AND TENUOUS FOR
HIM THEREAFTER.
KINTNER

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